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Nationwide, non-profit marine
conservation organization working to
protect our state's marine resources and
interests of anglers.
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RECREATIONAL ANGLERS FIGHTING FOR MARYLAND'S MARINE RESOURCES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**For further information contact:
Rick Elyar, 410-977-3782**

August 30, 2015

CCA MD Living Reef Action Campaign

Coastal Conservation Association (CCA Maryland) kicked off their **first formal oyster shell recycling program** here in Carroll County by collecting more than 10,000 lbs of oyster shell from Central Maryland restaurants since April 2015. Our shell recycling program is part of a reef restoration project we call our ***Living Reef Action Campaign*** which is to contribute to the restoration of the wild, eastern oyster and reefs. These reefs were once abundant throughout the Chesapeake Bay and played a critical role in filtering the bays water. Our campaign focuses on rebuilding these oyster reefs and habitat to improve water quality and provide critical habitat for striped bass and other aquatic creatures. We are also working to educate communities on the value of Maryland's Aquaculture industry in raising Oysters as a sustainable seafood choice, versus the continued overharvesting on the wild oysters. It is inspiring to see how much we have been able to accomplish within our community towards our restoration efforts as a result of the partnership between CCA Maryland and area restaurants as well as working with the City of Westminster's Downtown Coalition.

The goal of CCA Maryland's ***Living Reef Action Campaign*** is to recycle used oyster shells from area restaurants and bars in Frederick, Carroll, Howard, Baltimore and Harford county. Once we have 300 bushels collected, the University of Maryland's Horn Point Lab in Cambridge, MD will plant spat (baby oyster larvae) on our shells to grow new oysters. One oyster shell collected will generate about 10 new oysters. Therefore, our **300 bushels of shell being collected will be equivalent to approximately 161,240. With each shell generating about 10 new oysters, that's a reef capable of growing 1.6 million oysters on an artificial concrete reef structure.** With the filtering power of 50gals per day, per oyster, our campaign will have contributed to not only our states oyster restoration efforts but to the overall reef restoration of the Chesapeake and the marine and aquatic life associated with living reefs. It has been said, back at the peak of oyster populations, they had the abilities to filter all of the bays water within a couple days, not it takes more than a year to accomplish the same.

CCA Maryland is very excited to embark on this habitat project, which has allowed our local restaurants, their patrons and our community to play a part in helping restore the overall ecosystem of our Chesapeake Bay by saving oyster shells for CCA Maryland.

More information about how you can support CCA Maryland can be obtained on the CCA Maryland website, www.ccamd.org, or by contacting Rick Elyar, 410-977-3782.